



**IDRC in Asia**  
**Report to the Board of Governors**  
**October 17-18, 2002**

**Stephen J. McGurk and Roger Finan**  
**Regional Directors for Asia**

*September 2002*

## Table of Contents

<b>Abbreviations and Acronyms .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1 Regional Overview .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1 Key Issues and Trends in Asia.....	9
1.2 The Research Environment.....	11
<b>2 Centre Programming in Asia.....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Social and Economic Equity (SEE) .....	13
2.2 Information and communications Technologies for Development (ICT4D) .....	16
2.3 Environment and Natural Resource Management .....	17
2.4 Gender.....	20
2.5 Country Focus.....	22
<b>5 The Way Forward (Issues and Recommendations).....</b>	<b>23</b>

### Text Boxes

1. Fostering Linkages in Asia
2. Getting the EEPSEA Message Out
3. Voices for change: opening a new window on research practice through participatory monitoring and evaluation
4. The Institutionalization of Uplands Community Based Resource Management Research and Practice in Bhutan
5. Centre Programs Reflect Canadian Foreign Policy Objectives

### Annexes

- A. Summary mapping of programs to countries
- B. South Asia regional consultation summary

**Abbreviations and Acronyms**

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AsDB	Asian Development Bank
ASRO	East and Southeast Asia Regional Office
BAIF	Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation, Pune
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSPF	Corporate Strategic and Program Framework
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
EcoHealth	Ecosystems Approaches to Human Health Program Initiative
E/SE	East and Southeast
EEPSEA	Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia Secretariat
ENRAP	Electronic Networking for Rural Asia Pacific
ENRM	Environment and Natural Resource Management Program Area
GEH	Governance Equity and Health Corporate Project
GRPI	Genetic Resources Policy Initiative Project
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Dev't Program Area
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMFN	International Model Forestry Network Secretariat
INBAR	International Network for Bamboo and Rattan
MAPPA	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Program in Asia Project
MAPHealth	Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies and Health Care Network
MIMAP	Micro Impacts of Macro Adjustment Programs Program Initiative
MINGA	Managing Natural Resources Latin America & Carib. Program Initiative
MSSRF	M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

PAN	Pan-Asian Networking Program Initiative
PANTLEG	Pan Asia Networking Team Leaders Evaluation Group
PBDD	Partnerships and Business Development Division
PBR	Peacebuilding and Reconstruction Program Initiative
PI	Program Initiative
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
RAF	Regional Activity Funds
RITC	Research for International Tobacco Control Secretariat
RNR	Renewable Natural Resources Research Centre, Bajo
SARO	South Asian Regional Office
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEE	Social and Economic Equity Program Area
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SUB	Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Program Initiative
TEC	Trade Employment and Competitiveness Program Initiative
TERI	Tata Energy Research Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WTO	World Trade Organization

## **Executive Summary**

### **Regional Overview**

Asia has entered an era of considerable apprehension and uncertainty. An unsteady recovery from the Asian financial crisis was put paid by the onset of global recession as well as a series of local conflicts and the September 11 attacks. In the aftermath, tensions over Kashmir have exacerbated communal tensions. There is also apprehension about the impacts of rapidly growing Chinese competitiveness, widespread environmental degradation, stagnating small farm livelihoods, mismatches between local responsibilities and capabilities, and large and growing gender and other social inequities. These are prodding harsh re-examinations of state industrial and environmental policies and decentralization and renewed commitments to improvements in the skills and education of workforces, in the technologies and institutions supportive of small farming, and in needed changes in corporate governance and democratization. Despite these fears, Asia's relatively open economies, high savings accumulation and focus on improving human capacities have permitted most of Asia to continue to grow rapidly by world standards.

While the research setting differs significantly across the region, key challenges include:

- identifying projects and processes through which good research will have significant impact and benefit for economically and socially disadvantaged groups, particularly lower caste, indigenous, and resource poor peoples, and women,
- building flexible capacity, and
- strengthening national and regional research and advocacy networks to share learning from effective local development and build constituencies for change with policy advisors, research managers and broader public policy communities.

Networking is critical to all good research in Asia, indeed to every Centre program. Yet, networking in Asia bears special challenges of a political, historical and cultural nature (great heterogeneity, highly differentiated major language and cultural traditions, deep cultural and national suspicions, stronger links between Asian researchers and Northern research and training institutions than with each other, state dominated research and training agendas and weak civil society, and so on).

### **Centre Programming in Asia**

Reflecting regional priorities in poverty and the environment, Social and Economic Equity (SEE) program work in Asia builds skills and networks groups of Asian developing country researchers focused on i) the implications for Asia's poor of socially and gender differentiated macroeconomic adjustments and the provision of essential public services and ii) the training and economic analyses of environmental and resource management policies.

Management of most of this Asian poverty research is being devolved to Canadian and Philippine network managers, strengthening important partner institutions, opening up resource expansion opportunities and permitting extension of networks. This also permits

more integrative analyses of poverty reduction approaches and the strengthening of links between research and policy. In the short term, key areas of focus include:

- i) multidimensional poverty analysis, impacts of public spending, labour markets, intra-household allocation and poverty dynamics,
- ii) modelling of labour markets, the impacts of globalisation and liberalization on poverty, non-trade dimensions of globalisation, and impacts of poverty reduction policies and dynamic factors underpinning growth and development, and
- iii) providing advice and technical support to innovative community based poverty monitoring and planning initiatives and promoting the awareness and use of these tools for poverty monitoring and local governance.

SEE will strengthen this work over the current year by recruiting two officers to be based in Asian regional offices. This will also permit an expansion of work on behind-the-border trade liberalization issues as well as the development of new work on public finance, the implications of globalization and, possibly, the political economy of human security. SEE is well focused on a few high priority countries.

The Centre is widely acknowledged by national Asian science and technology agencies and donors as a leader in applications and analyses of information and communication technology for development (ICT4D). The Pan Asia Networking (PAN) PI leads this work with the assistance of the Bellanet Secretariat. Key activities include the multi-donor ICT4D Research and Development Small Grants Competition, the PAN-ASEAN Foundation platform for experimentation and training on Internet networking, conferencing, digital databases, distance learning and E-commerce, and the International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD) co-funded Electronic Networking for Rural Asia/Pacific Projects (ENRAP) program, facilitating links between rural development projects. In the short run, PAN is exploring ways to use ICTs in developing Asian settings to promote more representative, transparent and accountable governance, and in the development of key social and economic policies. PAN will strengthen this work with the recruitment this fall/winter of a second Asian based program officer to be located in the regional office in Delhi. Outside signature partnerships, ICT4D is well focused thematically and by country.

At the core of Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENRM) programs, the largest part of the Centre's active portfolio in Asia, are efforts to build flexible capacity in national and, increasingly sub-national, researchers to work on interdisciplinary participatory development programs with local communities. Two initiatives share primary responsibility for this work, Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB). Both initiatives support mechanisms by which communities and local authorities sustainably co-manage natural resources. Site research builds local strengths to respond to environmental, social, technological and institutional change and to provide insights for local policymaking around key resource management decision-making. It also provides the bases for national and regional networking around the development of research skills, methods and peer learning, and deepens analyses of local governance. CBNRM focuses on a coherent

approach to participatory analysis and action to reduce resource degradation and strengthen local resource management, SUB on sustainable management of biodiversity, with emphasis on medicinal plants and agricultural biodiversity for food and livelihood security. Both initiatives target women and marginalized rural groups who depend on these resources for livelihoods.

Vulnerable communities (both urban and rural) are further impoverished by the environmental and cultural side effects of liberalized trade and investment in commodity production and extraction, contributing to a growing number of local resource conflicts. Growing inequity exacerbates conflicts over land, forests, water or genetic resources. ENRM programs could more explicitly address these issues of conflict and security and build on opportunities to link with SEE programming around distributional, poverty monitoring and planning, and accountability issues.

Each Program Area supports analyses of gender differentiation and social heterogeneity in virtually every aspect of its work as well as through specific gender research components. The Gender Unit should be encouraged to work more closely with PIs and Secretariats on specific gender research programs and to ensure that learning from gender and social analyses in these initiatives is fully reflected in global debates. Specific focus for such syntheses in Asia includes: gender, tenure and globalization, gender and violence and gendered accountability.

### **The Way Forward**

The Centre is now in a much better position, whether in terms of financial, staff or system resources, to address these many challenges than has been the case at any time in the last five years. More fundamental assessment of strategic, program and operational issues should be done as part of the next Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CSPF). However, there is considerable evidence that present elements are working well, and should be given a chance to proceed, with the adjustments flagged above.

*Strategy:* The recent South Asian consultation confirms that Centre strategy, and major program elements, has stood the initial test of time and of most of our partners, as relatively coherent, focused and effective.

*Programs:* In light of increasing economic and security concerns and the dynamic research environment, some adjustments are clear, and underway, while others are only emerging. Medium term suggestions include:

- strengthening programming around the political economy of peace building in all programs, and, specifically, developing and expanding entry points in Asia for the Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PBR) initiative,
- extending existing SEE and ENRM work to include an explicit focus on the accountability of essential public services and local resource management,
- integrating research on the social dynamics of policy and governance change into select action research,

- applying a governance lens to health research in Asia, and
- strengthening global policy syntheses around key partner learning in local and adaptive water management.

*Country Focus:* The Centre's work is strongly focused on a few countries in Asia; most program groups are currently active in India, Vietnam, Nepal, China and the Philippines. Only a few groups are active in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia, and Afghanistan. (See Annex A) While this strong core country focus should be retained, some expansion of work in Indonesia, Pakistan, Laos and Sri Lanka seems appropriate. Some very limited exploration of the potential for Centre supported work in Afghanistan, North Korea and Burma also may be warranted as resources, circumstances and partners (DFAIT) permit.



## IDRC in Asia 2002

### 1 Regional Overview

#### 1.1 Key Issues and Trends

**Over the past three decades Asia has made notable economic and social gains.** Per capita income has tripled, life expectancy at birth has increased by almost 20 years and literacy rates have almost doubled. Yet, **900 million people in Asia still live in poverty.** In Southeast Asia and China, the financial crisis and global recession have slowed poverty alleviation efforts and many millions of people, particularly more vulnerable groups, have fallen back into poverty. In South Asia, more than 500 million people live on less than 1 USD per day – twice as many as in the whole of Africa. The majority of Asia's poor are concentrated in an arc stretching from Nepal through Bangladesh, Bhutan, Northeast India, Burma, Southwest China, Laos and Vietnam.

**Conflict and Security:** The impact of the September 11 attacks on the complex Asian political environment has been far reaching, creating both development opportunities for Afghanistan and Sri Lanka and new challenges for Pakistan and India in Kashmir and for Southeast Asian and Chinese ethnic politics. Heightened tensions between India and Pakistan have increased armed conflict and exacerbated longstanding communal tensions in the subcontinent. Elsewhere in Asia there are other serious global security concerns including North Korea, Burma and, potentially, Taiwan. More worrying perhaps is the proliferation of local conflicts (in Nepal, Northeast India, Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, Mindanao, Aceh, Kalimantan, Ambon, Timor, and West Papua), rooted in myriad cultural, religious, economic and environmental disputes and embedded in pervasive poverty and deeply iniquitous local power relationships.

**Economic Transition:** Both South and E/SE Asia are economies in transition. In E/SE Asia, the transformations are largely from central planning towards markets - China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia - with lagging political change and related tensions. In South Asia, virtually all countries are undergoing economic liberalisation, from less to considerably more market driven, with similar increases in growth rates, and with political tensions in (mostly) more democratic systems. Asia boasts among the world's most open regions and economies and its citizens are ever more exposed to volatile global trade and investment. There is considerable apprehension about the impact of rapidly growing Chinese competitiveness and market share. While Japan is unlikely to resume its role as Asia's pre-eminent engine of growth, the Chinese seaboard absorbs ever more global and regional productive capacity on its way to becoming the centre of much of world's manufacturing industries this century. These fears are prodding harsh re-examinations of state-led industrial policy approaches and renewed commitments to improvements in the skills and education of workforces and much needed but difficult changes in corporate governance and democratization. Despite these fears, most developing Asian countries continue to grow rapidly by world standards.

**Devolution and the Environment:** Considerable decentralisations of decision making for planning, investment, taxation, and land use are accompanying these transitions. Typically, these do not match expenditure responsibilities to revenues nor do they adequately consider equity, particularly in ecologically vulnerable areas on the periphery with significant indigenous populations. A majority of Asians live in rural areas working small farms or leaseholds, and depend on natural resources for livelihoods and well-being. The freshwater supply in Asia is among the worlds lowest, and half of the population in Asia does not have adequate water and sanitation. These communities and their local authorities are faced with the challenges of forest and coastal degradation, water scarcity, and rapid environmental change, often with few of the resources needed to redress them. Changing patterns of resource tenure and privatization further limit access and control over natural resources by marginalized groups, widening the pace and extent of agricultural colonization and industrial agriculture in these vulnerable ecosystems. This marginalization of the periphery is harshening long iniquitous local power relationships and poverty. This, in turn, is sharpening a host of political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental conflicts in the periphery and, following migrations of peoples away from the periphery, in large, increasingly polluted, urban centres as well.

**Gender:** Pervasive poverty is both cause and consequence of low levels of human development and, in particular, gender inequity in Asia. While specifics differ substantially, in many countries in the region women are denied access to basic services and essential assets such as land, and excluded from effective decision-making. South Asia has the world's worst sex ratio, highlighting intra-household inequities in access to nutrition, medical care, education and asset holding. South Asia also accounts for one third of the world's maternal deaths and nearly half of the children under age five in the subcontinent are malnourished. Trafficking in women and children remains a serious concern throughout Asia's poor periphery.

**Governance:** Issues of governance are at the core of the most pressing challenges in the region. In East and Southeast Asia, corporate governance and democratization are central issues, in South Asia, the provision of basic public services, such as health care and education. Accountability and transparency concerns, both within states and between states and society, and corruption are common to all parts of Asia. That said, democratization, regional integration, new information technologies and right to information movements are creating new opportunities to redress these concerns.

**Health:** Asia still has a significant burden of the communicable diseases that disproportionately affect the poor, including malaria, tuberculosis, respiratory diseases and HIV/ AIDs. The spread of HIV/AIDS in Asia has not been as rapid as in Africa, however Asia is home to more people living with HIV/AIDS than any other region beside sub-Saharan Africa — 6.6 million people last year. Already more than one million people have died in Asia from AIDS; in India, an estimated 3.97 million people were living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2001, more than any other country in the world except South Africa. In several countries, low national prevalence rates conceal serious, localized epidemics. In China, localized HIV/AIDS epidemics are occurring among injecting drug users in at least seven provinces, with prevalence rates higher than 70%, while

contaminated blood banks have infected perhaps 100,000 rural Henanese. AIDS is still Thailand's leading cause of death despite a very successful prevention program.

## 1.2 The Research Environment

The research environment in Asia is a major determinant of strategy and programs and it varies quite dramatically among sub-regions and countries. Some prominent features, and their implications follow.

**South Asia:** In South Asia, there is a wide range of research expertise and capacity. While India is home to many research institutions and researchers of international stature and many strong NGOs, these are more limited elsewhere in the sub-continent. Even in many strong South Asian organizations, there is limited capacity in interdisciplinary approaches – particularly those that bring in social and gender analysis – and few organizations that span both research and action. There are also significant challenges to bridging research and policy and building research strengths in implementation-oriented NGOs. Most NGOs and research institutes require further capacity building.

Key challenges, in this environment, include:

- identifying projects and processes through which good research will have significant impact and benefit for economically and socially disadvantaged groups, particularly lower caste, indigenous, and resource poor peoples, and women,
- building flexible capacity at local levels, and
- strengthening national and regional research and advocacy networks to share learning from effective local development so as to build constituencies for change with policy advisors, research managers and broader public policy communities.

**E/SE Asia:** In E/SE Asia, in the last decade, IDRC activities have expanded into the transitional economies of Indochina, as well as extending and consolidating support to China and Mongolia. In these countries, we are working in research contexts very different from elsewhere in the region, and indeed from most other parts of the world. Some of their special features are:

- weak social science research capacity;
- a plethora of institutions, all under-resourced and many redundant;
- extremely weak civil society;
- limited international contacts and experience,
- language constraints, particularly with English, and,
- an underdeveloped private sector.

Most are dismantling centrally mandated and instrumentalist research planning, reducing funding levels and moving towards more open granting council mechanisms. The challenges here are very much in terms of capacity building – notably, pushing institutions and individuals to work with each other and with strong institutions in the region and Canada. However, these countries also need immediate and effective policy development, so capacity building must be combined with short-term policy research.

**Networking Challenges:** Networking is critical to all good research, yet in Asia networking bears special challenges of a political, historical and cultural nature. These include: Asia's great heterogeneity, its highly differentiated language and cultural traditions, deep cultural and national suspicions, stronger links between Asian and Northern research and training institutions than between Asian institutions, state dominated research and training agendas, and weak civil society. These challenges must be specifically addressed in every research program.

**Technology and Networking:** Across Asia, capacity building increasingly relies on information and communication technologies (ICTs) for networking. Major technology engines (Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, Hyderabad and Bangalore) are found next door to countries where there is little Internet-based communications development. Many of IDRC's partners are asking for improved connectivity and access to information, and to learn from others tackling similar problems. Many are unsure how to integrate new technology opportunities into their programming, however they understand the losses involved in relative isolation. The challenge is to identify the critical information and networking gaps and address these through appropriate technologies. This requires linking social investments in ICTs and networking technologies to support for applied research.

**New Institutional Arrangements:** Civil society is weak in much of Asia as are the links between communities, local organisations, NGOs, research institutions and policy makers around economic and social development problems. This tends to foster an environment that does not effectively promote the utilization of research results. Addressing these challenges will require **new forms of institutional arrangements**. Institutional linkages and national (often in national languages) and regional networks need to be further developed in Asia and these networks require stronger links with policy advocacy. While steps have been made towards this through thematic based networks and network projects (See Box 1) increased efforts should be made on strengthening interactions within Asia.

#### Box 1: Fostering Linkages in Asia

CBNRM works to develop and demonstrate means for rural communities and authorities, from local to national, to manage natural resources sustainably. Where these innovations are successfully demonstrated, it is critical to draw out their implications for a considerably wider range of community and local governance issues. This means more reliance on emerging national and regional networks, which combine local and national researchers and researchers, activists, the media and government.

MIMAP focuses on ameliorating the inequitable impacts of structural adjustment, financial reforms, and decentralisation on poor men and women by improving knowledge among stakeholders of where and how interventions might positively affect key mediating institutions -- planning councils, labour markets and government revenue systems. In the Philippines for example, MIMAP is helping develop tools and processes that tie locally elected planning council investment decisions to measured changes in household poverty outcomes.

In addition to networks, IDRC should continue to expand and encourage new partnership strategies that include:

- drawing more donor resources into development research (IDRC is partnering with a number of strategic donor partners in the region and many show an interest in integrating applied research into programming);
- linking groups from newly industrializing Asian countries with individuals and institutions in poorer parts of Asia; and
- facilitating stronger linkages with Canadian organisations.

**Funding Challenges:** Many public research institutions in Asia have been compelled by a decade or more of government funding cuts to enter into contract research, commercial operations and other public-private partnerships. In some countries this has led to: declining counterpart contributions, a new focus on salary and core coverage even for researchers in mature government institutions, increased mobility of the most capable researchers and, consequently, far more organisational instability. This has put a range of pressures on IDRC including more direct project administration, more coverage of salary, travel and materials costs, capacity building focused more on research groups and less on organisational development, and more extended and supplemented projects.

## 2 Centre Programming in Asia

**2.1 Social and Economic Equity (SEE)** Reflecting regional priorities in poverty and the environment, SEE work in Asia focuses largely on building skills and networking groups of Asian developing country researchers focused on:

- i) the implications for Asia's poor of socially and gender differentiated macroeconomic adjustments and provision of essential public services (MIMAP) and
- ii) economic analyses of environmental and resource management policies (EEPSEA).

MIMAP was initiated a decade ago out of concern that adjustment policies adopted by Asian governments to correct macroeconomic imbalances and to achieve sustainable economic growth tended to have differential impacts on various groups in society. The initiative has since evolved around three main components: poverty monitoring, economic modeling, and policy advocacy. The initiative has developed analytical tools to capture the consequences of various economic reforms and to provide policymakers with good information bases on possible impacts. The initial phases of the initiative focused on formulating and specifying quantitative models for policy analysis and simulation, including macro econometric, income distribution, and household models. These resulted in analysis of policy reforms in such areas as tariff reform, tax reform, and fiscal and trade liberalization, among others. MIMAP has also developed and tested alternative poverty monitoring systems (community-based monitoring systems) to collect data at the village level for use in local planning. Thematic networks, in health, gender and microfinance, have been developed to undertake coordinated theoretical and empirical research, to support methodological development, and to develop policy learning.

MIMAP is devolving management of its Asian country work to Canadian and Philippine network managers, and in so doing supporting capacity development in important partner institutions. This opens up resource expansion opportunities and permits extension of MIMAP networks and some refocus on integrative analyses of approaches to poverty reduction and research to policy links. In the short run, key focal points include:

- i) multidimensional poverty analysis, impacts of public spending, labour markets, intra-household allocation and poverty dynamics,
- ii) econometric modelling of labour markets, in the context of the impacts of globalisation and liberalization on poverty, including public spending, non-trade dimensions of globalisation, impacts of poverty reduction policies and dynamic factors underpinning growth and development (capital accumulation, education, population and perhaps institutional and governance factors), and
- iii) sharing experiences and lessons of current community based poverty monitoring and planning initiatives, building and making available the knowledge, providing advice and technical support to related initiatives, supporting new initiatives, and promoting the awareness and use of these tools for poverty monitoring and local governance.

The EEPSEA Secretariat (Economy and Environment Program of Southeast Asia) seeks to integrate economic and environmental issues and policies through building resource economics capacity from a very low base. EEPSEA uses a networking approach to provide financial support and meetings, resource persons, access to literature, publication outlets and opportunities for comparative research across ten member countries in developing Asia. A common element of EEPSEA supported research is the economic analyses of environmental problems or policies. Typically, projects seek to identify the market and policy failures leading to environmentally damaging behaviour and to recommend actions that remedy these. In addition to its regional activities, EEPSEA is developing national programs in two key focus countries, China and Vietnam, and assisting, where possible, the development of national environmental economics associations and an embryonic South Asian focused environment network.

Until recently, the Trade Employment and Competitiveness (TEC) Initiative did not support much work outside of limited activities in South Asia. In part, this was a recognition of the openness and analytic strength of most of developing Asia around first generation trade liberalization issues, relative to Africa and Latin America, and in part a reflection of limited SEE financial and human resources. However, the Asian financial crisis and the Singapore behind-the-border trade agenda has revealed capacity needs in Asian policy research and the TEC PI is moving to help address some of these needs and to engage Asian scholars and advocates in key international debates on globalization, trade in services, product standards, and competition policy. The TEC initiative will expand work in Asia to help developing economies in Asia come to grips with their national economic governance challenges in the wake of the crisis and recession and China's accession to the WTO. Key areas of focus will be India, Vietnam, China, Indochina and possibly the Philippines.

The Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PBR) PI involvement in Asia has been minimal, and is currently limited to a small study in Sri Lanka. However, recognizing the proliferation of local conflict in Asia as well as the possibilities for peace building in a number of areas of long standing conflict (Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Indonesia), PBR is currently conducting a scoping study in Asia to identify entry points for research support. Rising security concerns in the region and crosscutting impacts necessitate a more concerted and focused approach to issues of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. While this may in part be met through increased involvement of PBR, security concerns, and the ensuing impacts on social and gender relations and communal tensions, will need to be integrated throughout programs.

The recruitment of new SEE staff in Asia over the coming year will permit a stronger SEE presence in trade, the implications of globalization on poverty, public finance and, possibly, the political economy of human security.

Other corporate SEE efforts include the Asia Development Research Forum (ADRF), now chaired by the Thailand Research Fund, a Thai government research management group based in Bangkok, which links leading researchers and research managers, and a select group of funding agencies, around a forward-looking agenda on ageing, economic and financial governance and conflict; and the RITC Secretariat, developing research in Asia on the health and social implications of tobacco use, the economics of tobacco and tobacco farming and alternative livelihoods in China, Vietnam and India. ADRF remains a strategic initiative -- its policy review work holds out the prospect of some visioning and oversight of the Centre's work in Asia -- it will be developed and expanded as much as is possible, however as this is a difficult enterprise the next eighteen months will decide the form and extent of its potential. The Micronutrients Initiative is now an independent institution.

**Significant Program Outcomes:**

- i) Skills and networks for national aggregate economic analyses have been embedded in key national research and government agencies (Philippines, Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Vietnam and Pakistan).
- ii) Skills, tools and systems for livelihoods based poverty monitoring have been developed in a number of Asian government agencies (Philippines, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Vietnam).
- iii) Innovations in linking poverty monitoring to local poverty planning and investments have been started and taken up at sub-national levels in the Philippines, Vietnam, and Nepal.
- iv) A body of well trained and increasingly high profile, poverty researchers has been built who generate substantial interest in key findings and approaches among national policy makers and other donors (CIDA, AsDB and DFID).
- v) A corps of well-trained resource economists, unprecedented outside the G8, has been trained in developing Asian think tanks, research institutes and universities. Research findings from this nascent network are increasingly reflected in national policies on residential water pricing, community forestry,



- waste recovery and sanitation management, conservation area management, effluence trading and so on. (See Box 2)
- vi) Award winning research: e.g. research medal from Global Development Network(GDN) 2001 for Indian MIMAP team member.
  - vii) The Micronutrients Initiative has become a mature, independent organization, with its South Asian office still housed at SARO.

#### Box 2: Getting the EEPSEA Message Out

EEPSEA has taken a variety of measures to increase the impact of the work it supports. This has included: creating channels of communication between researchers and decision-makers, and improving the communication skills of researchers. Even before substantial research capacity had been developed, EEPSEA held seminars in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to acquaint government with the practical contributions that environmental economics can make to decision-making. Creating a demand for policy research can be as important as creating a supply. The program has conducted a workshop on drawing policy recommendations from research and communicating them effectively. Part of this communication strategy includes a website, publication series, and policy briefs (provided in a number of languages).

The most visible dissemination activities are those done directly by EEPSEA. But these are the tip of the iceberg - the researchers themselves are also very active. A recent project in the Philippines, for example, will investigate the likely response of households to new garbage collection fees by offering people vouchers that simulate different payment systems. The project is carried out in close collaboration with the municipal government, whose staff will participate in monitoring the households. Efforts like these increase the likelihood of impact by involving users from the earliest stages.

Given the variety of channels through which change can take place, impact monitoring is indispensable. The first tracer study of EEPSEA award recipients (published in 2000) produced so much unexpected information that a tracer study is now conducted every year.

## 2.2 Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D)

The Centre is widely acknowledged by national science and technology agencies and donors active in Asia as a leader in the support of research on the applications and analyses of ICT4D. The key focus of Centre support for ICT4D work is to:

- i) Provide a platform and resources permitting digital pioneers in developing Asia to explore and evaluate the application of ICT4D for networking, conferencing, communities of practice, database content development and management, distance learning, E-commerce, E-government, community managed telecentres and telemedicine.
- ii) Engage digital pioneers in developing Asia with ICT networks, professional associations and policy analysts in more developed areas of Asia (Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia).
- iii) Develop strategic partnerships with key national science and technology agencies, select regional donors (UNDP, UNESCO, IFAD, and the ASEAN Foundation) and the private sector (professional associations and firms) to support innovations in the application and policy analyses of ICT4D.

The PAN team leads this work with Bellanet's assistance. Key activities include the ICT4D Research and Development Small Grants Competition, co funded by UNDP and



the Asia Pacific National Internet Committee, a private sector association; the PAN-ASEAN Foundation Collaboratory, a platform for supporting experimentation and training on Internet networking, conferencing, digital databases, distance learning and E-commerce; and the Electronic Networking for Rural Asia/Pacific Projects (ENRAP) program, co-funded with IFAD, which facilitates the use of ICTs to link IFAD rural development projects and promote networking. The ENRAP second phase will witness more substantial involvement of IDRC program content particularly through CBNRM and possibly MIMAP.

In the short run, PAN is exploring ways to use ICTs in developing Asian settings to promote more representative, transparent and accountable governance, and in the development of key social and economic policies. PAN will strengthen this work by recruitment this fall of a second Asia based program officer, located in Delhi.

Bellanet has actively supported a number of Knowledge Management initiatives in Asia, including a regional workshop held in September 2001 with the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in Chennai, and a second one in Kathmandu a year later. Bellanet is negotiating with MSSRF to host a regional program staff person.

#### **Significant Program Outcomes:**

- i) The seeding of key ICT4D capabilities in key national science and technology agencies (Mongolia, Vietnam, Philippines, Laos, Indonesia), regional development centres (ASEAN Foundation), and select development NGOs (MSSRDF, FOOD) in developing Asia.
- ii) Linking Asian digital pioneers to the rest of the world.
- iii) Developing and sharing learning from community managed telecentres (PANTLEG) and distance learning innovations (Mongolia, Indonesia and Bhutan).
- iv) State-of-the-art reviews of ICT4D work in virtually every region of Asia (Asia Digital Reviews).
- v) Award winning research: e.g. American Society for Information Science and Technology – ICT Award for Ismail Fahmi, founder of the Indonesian Digital Library Network.
- vi) Centre leadership in this dynamic field is maintained through key partnerships (R&D Competition, Collaboratory, Asia Digital Review).

**2.3 Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM)** The focus of Centre support in this area, comprising the largest part of the Centre's active portfolio in Asia, is to build flexible capacity in national and, increasingly, sub-national researchers to work on interdisciplinary participatory development programs with local communities. Local communities, particularly marginalized rural communities on the periphery, are facing a host of challenges in the wake of moves throughout Asia to decentralize decision-making over land use, investment planning, rural development and natural resource access and management. Three initiatives share responsibility for this work: CBNRM, SUB and EcoHealth, and one Secretariat, the International Model Forest Network (IMFN).

**Box 3. Voices for change: opening a new window on research practice through participatory monitoring and evaluation, <http://www.cbnrm-asia.org>, <http://www.cbik.org>**

The CBNRM program supported two research teams in Yunnan and Guizhou provinces in southwest China to carry out an innovative participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) training project, one of the very first ever efforts of this kind in China. PM&E is a joint effort between researchers and other stakeholders (such as farmers, government officials, or extension workers) to systematically monitor and evaluate research and development activities. PM&E training was based on learning-by-doing and interaction, and consisted of a series of three workshops combined with fieldwork to strengthen conceptual and methodological skills. The project documented the cycle of introduction, implementation, and assessment of this training in a real-life setting.

Learning about and practicing PM&E opened a new window on the research practice of the two teams. Its integration into the project cycle strengthened the learning, accountability, and effectiveness of the efforts of the two teams, in particular through the realization that what matters is not only *what* is assessed, but *who* does the measuring and assessing. The experience gained during the PM&E activity also contributed to a better understanding of *how* different concerns and interests are represented and negotiated in a research process. The PM&E training and fieldwork contributed greatly to a better understanding by researchers and local government officials of the interests and needs of both women and men farmers. It also strengthened farmers' participation in the research process in Yunnan and Guizhou and catalyzed the introduction of a self-monitoring mechanism among farmers in Guizhou for the management of their local water system, thus enhancing local governance.

*We re-elected our village leader. The former leader was not strong-willed and did not want to assume responsibility for sharing his time for the common good of the village. We employed a group responsibility system to manage forest and wastelands clarifying the rights, duties and benefits of group members. This strategy encouraged farmers to plant trees; last year, we planted more than 20,000 trees on the wasteland. The tree survival rate was as high as 94%. We also installed a drinking water system, but unfortunately the water source does not provide enough water. We are unable to make good use of the system. From this we learn that when we make a decision we have to be careful and consider the different aspects of things. — Niuanyun village resident, reflecting on progress made by the Community-Based Natural Resource Management project in Guizhou, in a monitoring meeting with researchers from the Guizhou Academy of Agricultural Sciences*

The Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) initiative is an Asian based program that supports mechanisms by which communities sustainably manage natural resources, and by which various levels of government policies can and must contribute. Site-specific community managed research builds capabilities to diagnose and develop environmental, social, technological and institutional innovations. Its approaches, processes and findings provide insights for local policymaking around key resource management decision-making. It emphasizes participatory and interdisciplinary research that builds flexible and adaptive capacity for change and accounts for gender differences and social heterogeneity between users of collective and private resources. Site work also provides the bases for national and regional networking around approaches to research, for instance for capacity building, methodological development and peer learning among partners in the region on gender and social analyses, on analyses of governance frameworks, on participatory technology development and on participatory monitoring and evaluation.

The Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB) PI supports research in Asia for the sustainable management of biodiverse resources, with emphasis on medicinal plants, agricultural and aquatic biodiversity for food and livelihood security. Research targets women and rural marginalized groups who depend on these resources for their livelihoods, and aims to strengthen *in situ* conservation and management methods for improved production, marketing and benefits from these resources. Like CBNRM, SUB's projects promote analysis that explore differential social, gender and indigenous knowledge and capacities and seek to inform policies. The Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Program in Asia (MAPPA) aim to disseminate and implement knowledge, lessons learned and local-level innovations among a network of researchers and R&D institutions. SUB working with ICARDA is also supporting the CGIAR "Future Harvest Consortium for the Reconstruction of Agriculture in Afghanistan", to strengthen seed systems and agriculture in the country. In addition, building on the results of Crucible II, the Genetic Resource Policy Initiative (GRPI) is active in the region, particularly Nepal and Vietnam working with governments and multi-stakeholders in the development of agricultural biodiversity policies.

The Ecohealth (Ecosystems Approaches to Human Health) PI supports research, largely in South Asia, which recognizes the differential impact of environmental stress, and particularly that caused by mining, intensified agriculture and urbanization, upon the health of different groups and identifies where public health and sanitation interventions are most needed. While research support has been limited to parts of India and Nepal, the PI also manages and supports a large CIDA co-funded project in India on Women's Health and Empowerment. This project is a good example of directly linking applied research with development activities, in particular working with Self Help Groups as a platform for social change, while also building capacity in research and monitoring and evaluation skills in a large rural development NGO (BAIF).

The International Model Forest Network Secretariat fosters cooperation and collaboration in advancing management, conservation, and sustainable development of forest resources through a worldwide network of working model forests. To date, only Japan has developed a model forest, however China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand are interested. The Centre partially supports the core costs of the International Network on Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), an IDRC secretariat that graduated in 1997 as an independent international organization based in China. INBAR maintains an officer in SARO. INBAR is exploring projects with CBNRM, Minga, RITC and SUB initiatives.

Vulnerable communities (both urban and rural) are further impoverished by the environmental and cultural side effects of liberalized trade and investment in commodity production and extraction, contributing to a growing number of local resource conflicts. Growing inequity exacerbates conflicts over land, forests, water or genetic resources. ENRM programs could more explicitly address these issues of conflict and security and build on opportunities to link with SEE programming around distributional, poverty monitoring and planning, and accountability issues.

In South Asia and in China, water security is a key concern as water tables fall precipitously and municipal and industrial pollution render much surface supply unusable. In Asia, as the impacts of climate change are already being felt, the ENRM programs are investigating farmers' adaptive management strategies to support and strengthen local resilience to impending changes. Sharing learning of work on coastal management from E/SE Asia to South Asia appears warranted. IDRC is a research leader on water demand management, local water management and adaptive management strategies. ENRM should be encouraged to find ways to improve networking across regions in these areas, particularly with a view to developing and articulating coherent syntheses of lessons from this work for global fora.

In the short run, ENRM programs should strengthen methodological underpinnings and related tools development and dissemination. This will improve the sharing of comparative work and extend partners' understanding and participation in key national and regional policy communities (for instance, on forest law, land use decentralization, and tenure for non-cropping lands). Here again, ENRM should articulate policy syntheses for global debates, syntheses all the more compelling for their rigour.

**Some significant program outcomes:**

- i) CBNRM partners and work in Bhutan have been instrumental in the development of the new agricultural policy that decentralizes and authorizes community based management of collectively-owned lands and natural resources, which is the majority of land-holdings. In China, the Office of Poverty Eradication has decreed that local poverty projects must be "participatory" and CBNRM partners are providing key methodological advice.
- ii) SUB supported work in medicinal plants has been instrumental in the creation and establishment of a National Medicinal Plants Board in India which promotes the sustainable management, production and marketing of medicinal plant resources. SUB, through the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Program in Asia (MAPPA) is also actively participating in the creation of a national board and policy in Nepal.
- iii) Since 1997, the Ecohealth PI has supported two phases of a research project with the Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI) to assess the effects of iron mining on human health and well-being in Goa, India. The project has developed a number of tools so that local communities, the government, and mining companies can track changes over time. These tools helped TERI construct a picture of the mining industry's sustainability; helping stakeholders to head off potential problems and address those that currently exist. It also helped foster the development of new assessment capacities by local government to manage ecosystems sustainably for human well-being.
- iv) Award winning research, e.g. World Bank "Most Successful R&D Project Award" for BAIF, an Indian NGO.

**Box 4. The Institutionalization of Uplands Community Based Resource Management Research and Practice in Bhutan**

This landlocked kingdom's landscape and Buddhist culture fascinate visitors and scholars, but the country's natural resource management strategy may be the most compelling feature of all. Forests cover more than 70% of the country and farmers practice subsistence agriculture on small fields carved into steep Himalayan slopes or in small mountain valleys. Rice is the most important food crop but as the population grew in the 1980's domestic demand exceeded production. In 1984, Bhutan began a collaboration with the International Rice Research Institute and IDRC to support participatory on-farm research and in support the Bhutanese government established the Renewable Natural Resources (RNR) Research Centre at Bajo - the first agricultural research centre in Bhutan. Other support followed gradually and the methodological focus of research shifted to reflect a Community-Based Natural Resource Management approach. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is now a partner with IDRC in an ongoing research project.

**Early IDRC support:**

- Laid the foundation of a national agricultural research system.
- Created a growing base of trained Bhutanese researchers and extensionists.
- Increased access by Bhutanese farmers to new rice and other farming technologies.
- Increased farmers' incomes and led to more diversified farming systems.
- Generated a growing indigenous body of knowledge on Bhutan's agriculture.

With support from the Minister of Agriculture, Lyonpo Dr Kinzang Dorji, the RNR Research Centre recently set a new goal for their research and development system. Recognizing that only 4% of the land in the kingdom is privately held, they have decided to encourage decentralization and community-based management of collectively owned lands and natural resources. Their new national CBNRM policy is intended to:

- secure and improve livelihoods
- lead to sustainable and harmonious resource use
- provide local people an opportunity and responsibility to manage their own local resources
- create diverse local opportunity within an enabling legal and policy framework

These new policy initiatives did not appear overnight, rather from long-term IDRC research collaboration and demonstrably successful innovations developed by the Bhutanese themselves, and tailored to their unique cultural and biophysical context. This formerly isolated kingdom is now actively seeking regional networking opportunities to build on their experience and share knowledge to help implement the new national CBNRM policy framework.

**2.4 Gender**

Each major initiative supports analyses of gender differentiation and social heterogeneity in virtually every aspect of its work as well as through specific research components. As example of this in SEE, every MIMAP country project looks at gender and social differentiation as they relate to multidimensional poverty monitoring and local poverty planning and investment. Reflecting regional needs, MIMAP's Gender thematic network has also developed important new measures of psychosocial stress in South Asian households to supplement more usual analyses of gender differentiation across income, education, health and asset holding indices. In its support for economic modeling, MIMAP is pioneering work on the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of intrahousehold analyses, work that for the first time offers the promise of explicit treatment of the non-monetarized aspects of womens work within households in aggregate national economic analyses. Finally, MIMAP is partnering with UNIFEM on the development of gender budgets analyses and training. Much of this work is done in conjunction with the Gender Unit, which also supports a separate global Gender Research competition.



### Box 5 Centre Programs Reflect Canadian Foreign Policy Objectives

In terms of big picture priorities – the promotion of democracy, human rights advocacy, sustainable development, trade and investment opportunities, new immigrant constituencies (40% of Canada's new immigrants are from Asia) and peacebuilding – Asia is more important than ever to Canada. The Centre can play a useful, if limited, role in helping Canada meet many of these priorities.

The Centre's firm foundation in Asia, built by three decades of support for a host of Asian scientific research, provides useful links and leverage for Canada. This is so both in terms of research capacity within IDRC and in southern institutions and individuals who know Canada through IDRC, and in widespread Asian research community perceptions that Canada through IDRC is an effective and neutral research manager and leader. This perception is particularly useful given that the Centre is one of only a few Canadian institutions actively and continuously engaged in Asia during a period when Canadian foreign policy concerns elsewhere gave rise to fears of a "diminishing presence" of Canada in Asia. Indeed, Canada has for some time relied on the social capital and goodwill built up in Asia by institutions like the Centre. The Centre has maintained these perceptions of Canadian research leadership, particularly in areas of central concern to Canadian foreign policy making like ICTs, sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

Centre programs in Asia also reflect strong Canadian values (economic prosperity, global stability and democratization) as well as priority Asian needs – poverty alleviation, informing policy trade-offs between economics and the environment, understanding the consequences of globalization, seeding innovations in ICT4D, linking digital pioneers to strong Asian digital engines, and building flexible capacity at local levels to address resource management needs in the poor periphery. The transmission of these values, through Centre intellectual and financial support, also serves to identify Asian research communities with these values in ways important to Canadians.

## 2.5 Country Focus

A brief summary of **country focus** in Asia follows:

	<b>Target Countries</b>	<b>Collaborating Asian Countries</b>	<b>Presently Excluded or Non-Target Countries</b>
<b>South Asia</b>	India, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan		Central Asian Republics, the Maldives
<b>E/SE Asia</b>	Vietnam, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia	Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Hongkong, Japan, South Korea, Australia	Burma, N Korea, Papua New Guinea* (1 project), South Pacific* (1 project)

\* There have been past projects, and inclusions in networks, but issues of focus and the high costs of travel reduced emphases in these countries over the past several years.

This summary suggests more dispersion than is the case. Most program groups are currently (and for the last decade have been) active in India, Vietnam, Nepal, China and the Philippines. Fewer are active in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Afghanistan. (See Annex A)

### 3 The Way Forward (Issues and Recommendations)

The Centre is now in a much better position, whether in terms of financial, staff or system resources, to address these many challenges than has been the case at any time in the last five years. More fundamental assessment of strategic, program and operational issues should be done as part of the next CSPF. However, there is considerable evidence that present elements are working well, and should be given a chance to proceed, with the adjustments flagged above.

Strategy The present broad strategy of targeting selective niches for the integration of environmental, social and economic issues and policies, and supporting the expansion of information and communications as major means of sustainable development, is robust for the remainder of CSPF. The recent South Asian consultation confirms that this strategy, and major program elements, has stood the initial test of time and of most of our partners, as relatively coherent, focused and effective. (See Annex B for highlights)

Based on the information and assessments above, it is recommended that no major changes be made at this time in the content of IDRC program activities in Asia during the remainder of the CSPF. Adjustments will continue to be made in the project content of PIs and Secretariats, in accordance with changing priorities and circumstances, and as described in the previous program section.

Programs In light of increasing economic and security concerns and the dynamic research environment in South Asia, some adjustments are clear, and underway, while others are only emerging. Suggestions include:

**Post Conflict Reconstruction:** A number of security challenges and opportunities will remain into our next corporate planning phase – all with implications for Canadian foreign policy. Several areas may be on track for post-conflict reconstruction (Timor, Sri Lanka, Northeastern India and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Kalimantan and Mindanao), however others appear to be heading deeper into conflict (Nepal, Aceh and Ambon). The relevance of PBR to medium term challenges in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Indonesia should be examined and farther down the road perhaps even Northeastern India and the Philippines. The Asia scoping study will identify entry points.

**Accountability Frameworks for Public Service Provision and Local Resource Management:** Persistent and dynamic poverty troubles much of Asia's periphery. However, poverty alleviation relies on the effectiveness of typically weak governance systems in overcoming the predation of the powerful in labour, land and financial markets. MIMAP and ENRM programming remains extremely relevant, however these could be supplemented by much more explicit linkages between poverty monitoring, community based work and analyses of local governance systems.

It should be possible to focus poverty monitoring and analyses and participatory development directly on the relevance and accountability of essential service delivery or local resource management to the poor. This might centre on analyses of the provision of

a specific public service, say health, or on the efficacy of specific types of state-society or intra-governmental accountability measures, for instance what do community based poverty programs say about the delivery of government poverty or public works programs, what do water user parliaments comprising diverse management forms say about the operation of canal commands and major irrigation projects.

This, in turn, could be usefully complemented by research on the governance relations of emerging local institutions. More explicit attention could be paid in research to the social dynamics of change, and particularly to mechanisms that help researchers, communities and advocates weave together research, development and social auditing to create narratives for change.

**Sharpening Syntheses from Water Management:** In South Asia and in China, water security is a key concern. Water tables are rapidly depleting and municipal and industrial pollution renders much remaining surface supply unusable. ENRM should take advantage of IDRC's research leadership in Asia and worldwide, to continue strengthening networking around demand management, local water management and adaptive local water management strategies with a view to sharpening syntheses for global debates. Such sharp thematic syntheses can generate the research questions at the heart of the next CSPF.

**Health:** IDRC can contribute to health development in Asia by supporting research on the links between resource degradation, rural poverty, migration, gender inequity, and health. Ongoing work on nutrition, sanitation, medicinal plants, and community and watershed management can be strengthened by a more systematic approach to health. New activities, such as HIV/ AIDS, could also be explored. IDRC's health programming in Asia is quite dispersed in a number of separate programs (RITC, Ecohealth, MAPPA, RAF and MAPHealth). One challenge will be to build linkages that increase impact. While the focus of these programs is different, many fit within a conceptual understanding of health work framed around equity and governance concerns. This would also fit well with the accountability approach suggested above.

**Gender:** Given gender inequities in the region, all programs must continue to build in and expand understanding of gender and social analysis in research. The gender unit should be encouraged to work more closely with PIs and Secretariats on specific research and to ensure that learning from initiatives around social and gender analyses in these initiatives is fully reflected in global debates. Specific syntheses in Asia would include: gender, tenure and globalization, gender and violence and gendered accountability.

**Building Research and Evaluation Capacity:** Gaps in research and monitoring and evaluation capacity among many strong partners in the region have been identified as one of the major challenges to linking Asian research and implementation. Broader use of outcome mapping and PM&E tools will help the Asian research community address these needs. Similarly, lessons from the Evaluation Unit led work on links between research and policy in long term Centre work in Asia, as well as from the Corporate Assessment



Framework and more explicit use of program evaluations and periodic regional consultations should improve our ability to address these challenges.

*Country Coverage and Focus* Some expansion of activity in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Indonesia appears warranted, and is beginning to occur in MIMAP, CBNRM and PAN initiatives and in EEPSEA. To permit this, greater attention to linkages and networking relative to country-specific activities, or perhaps a narrower set of country foci, may be warranted for the next CSPF, particularly in ENRM, and it is recommended that the assessment of these possibilities be undertaken in preparation to the upcoming CSPF.

In South Asia, ENRM programs are beginning to focus on Northeastern India and the Himalayas. Few donors have worked there due to its isolation, difficulties of travel and basic living conditions. However, the changing roles of state governments and their interest in collaboration is opening possibilities for policy change and broader influence.

Some exploration of the potential for Centre supported work in North Korea and Burma seems warranted. While it remains impossible to work within either country without unacceptable relationships with, and legitimization of, military regimes, this is shifting slowly and the Centre may want to permit some exploration, as circumstances, resources and partnerships (DFAIT) permit. In Afghanistan, the Centre is taking a cautious approach to ensure that our involvement best matches our expertise and locally identified priorities. In addition to the SUB activity on seed rehabilitation, opportunities to strengthen a rebuilding Kabul University should be explored. The Centre continues to avoid new programming activities in the Central Asian Republics. Relatively high-income levels and complex political and cultural settings call for considerable preparation and knowledge before proceeding, which seems unrealistic given our limited resources and current focus.

## Annex A

## A S I A : Active Portfolio by Location of Research

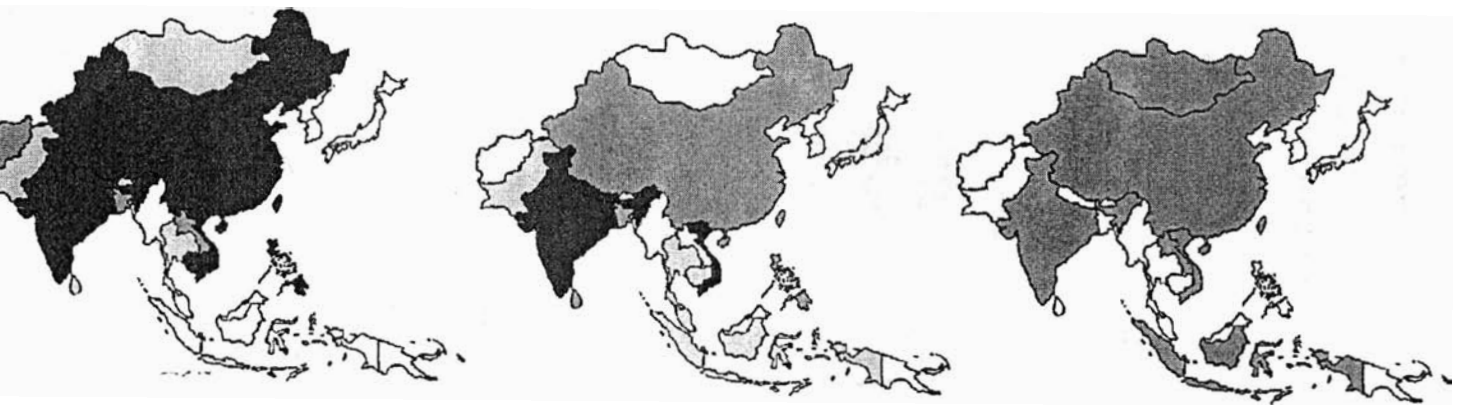
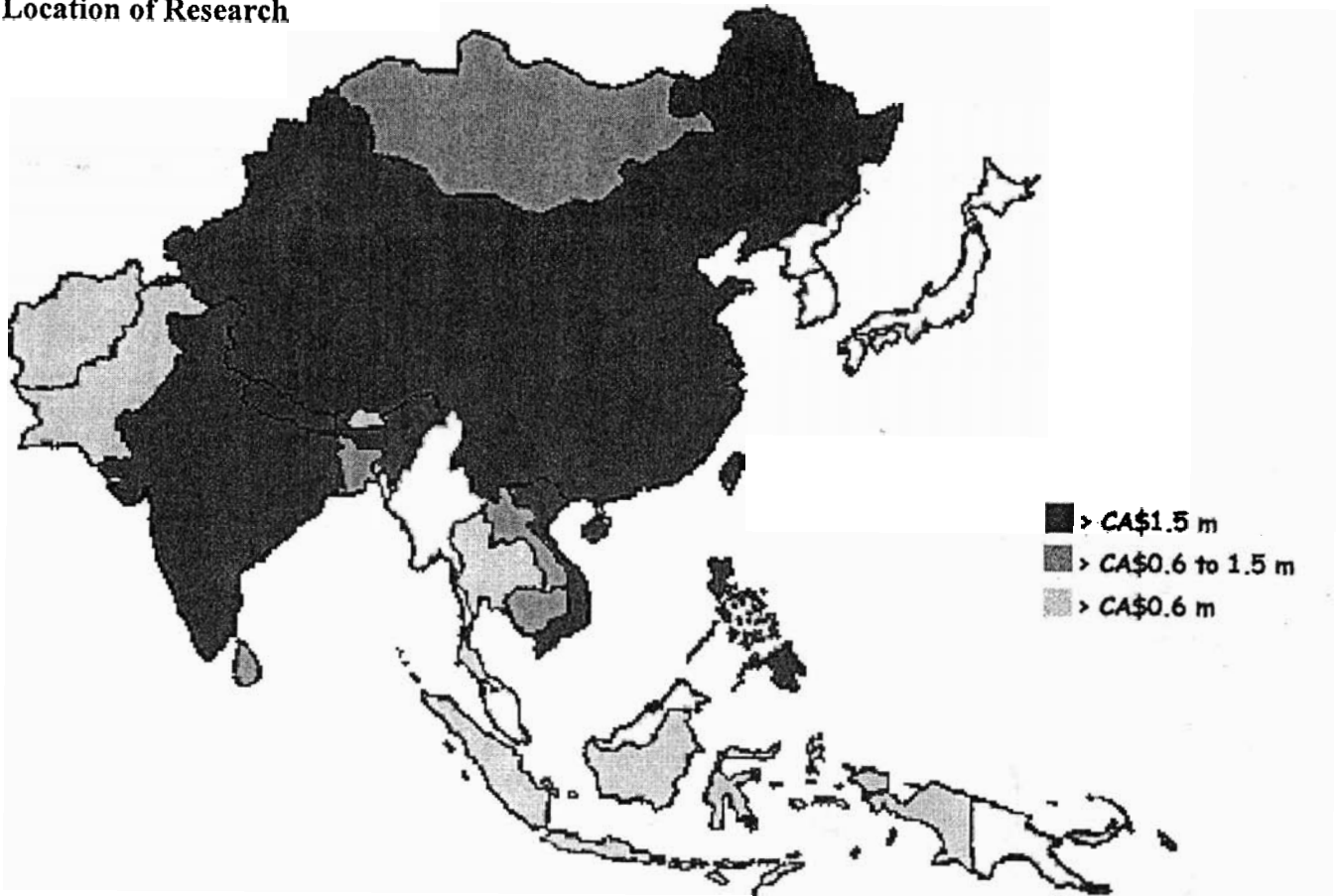
The chart below shows IDRC's active portfolio in Asia on August 19, 2002 by grant total. It details countries where the research supported by IDRC is taking place; a line for regional (multi-country) projects; IDRC's total grant portfolio (internal and external funding combined) and the grant portfolio by Program Area; the total number of active projects; and the total number of recipient institutions in each country. Active program spread includes research projects (PIs, Corporate Projects, and other activities such as those of former PIs) and Secretariat projects.

COUNTRY OF STUDY	TOTAL GRANT CAD	ENRM CAD	SEE CAD	ICT4D CAD	NO. PROJECTS	NO. RECIPIENTS
Regional <sup>1,4</sup>	14,324,590	4,403,152	6,124,457	3,796,981	66	89
India <sup>2</sup>	6,188,563	4,085,294	1,812,369	290,900	33	27
Vietnam <sup>3</sup>	4,852,367	1,019,800	3,398,067	434,500	50	43
Nepal	2,790,886	1,024,415	1,766,471		15	13
China	1,651,957	802,684	534,673	314,600	13	12
Philippines	1,748,340	1,263,430	484,910		6	6
Cambodia	1,400,031	1,372,040	27,991		5	4
Bangladesh	1,185,800	781,300	404,500		5	5
Lao PDR	1,026,290	606,776	19,514	400,000	5	4
Sri Lanka	718,241	157,900	560,341		5	5
Mongolia	658,500	287,300		371,200	5	3
Afghanistan	503,563	503,563			2	2
Bhutan	379,145	366,400		12,745	4	3
Pakistan	295,300		295,300		1	1
Indonesia	308,685		50,685	258,000	1	1
Thailand	217,234	150,100	67,134		2	2
Papua New Guine	5,690			5,690	1	1
<b>TOTAL CAD</b>	<b>38,255,182</b>	<b>16,824,154</b>	<b>15,546,412</b>	<b>5,884,616</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>% OF TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>15%</b>		

### Notes:

1. Regional activities are clearly multi-country efforts, like the ICT4D R&D Competition, ENRAP projects, the PAN Collaboratory, the SAGA holding pots, the MAPPA and CBCRM LeaRN projects, SACSINITI, PAFTAD, DAN and ADRF support and EEPSEA Secretariat core salaries and workshop costs. Many of these are single component multiple recipient activities.
2. CAD 3 m of the ENRM figure can be attributed to the CIDA cofunded BAIF project.
3. CAD 2.4 m of the SEE figure can be attributed to the CIDA cofunded VEEM project.
4. CAD 4.5 m of the SEE figure can be attributed to the EEPSEA Secretariat.

Location of Research



ENRM

- > CA\$1.3 m
- > CA\$0.5 to 1.3 m
- > CA\$0.5 m

SEE

- > CA\$1.5 m
- > CA\$0.5 to 1.5 m
- > CA\$0.02 m

ICTs4D

- > CA\$0.2 m

**Annex A**
**A S I A : Active Portfolio by Country of Recipient**

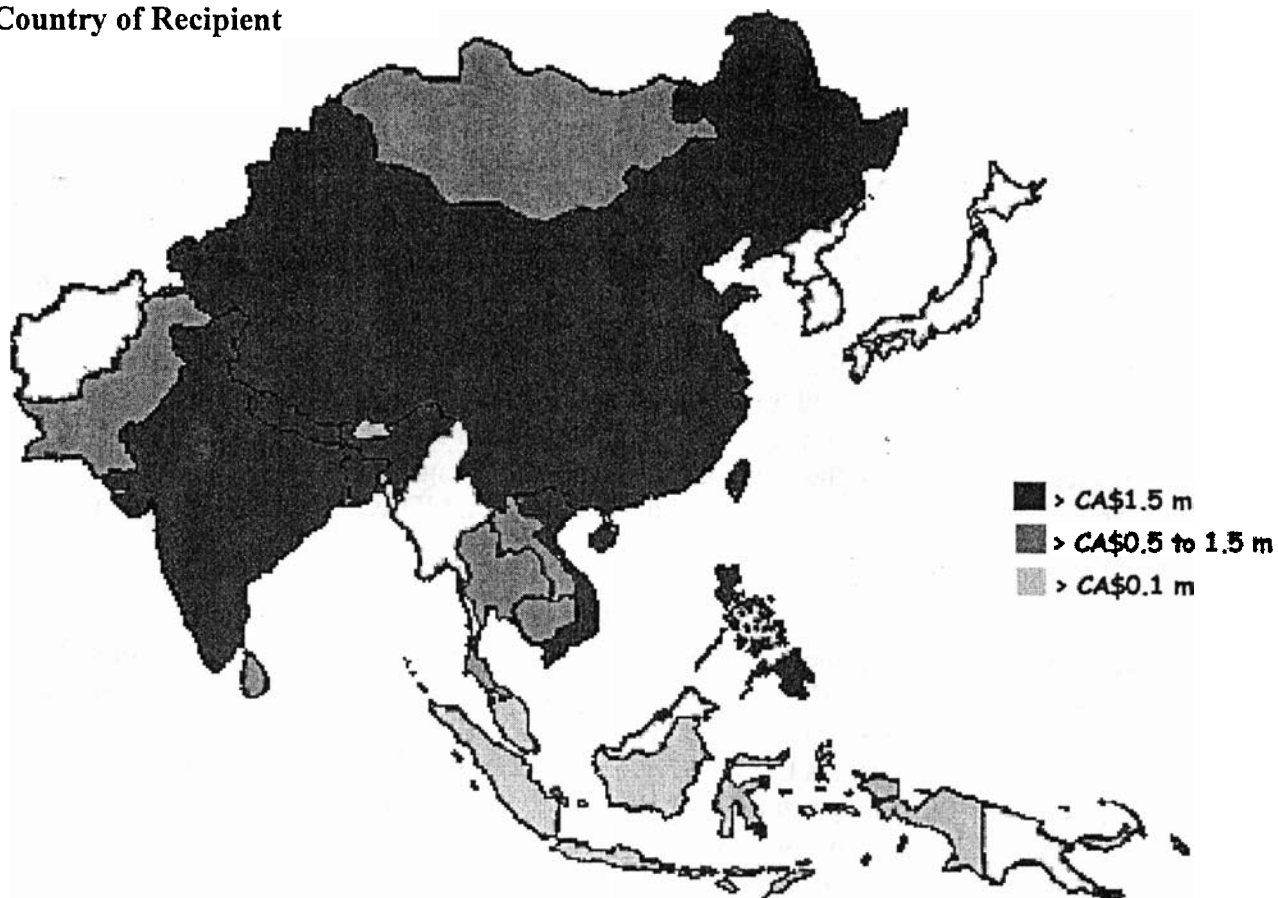
The chart below shows IDRC's active portfolio in Asia as of August 19, 2002 ranked by grant total. It details the countries of recipients including: IDRC's total grant portfolio (internal and external funding combined) and the grant portfolio by Program Area; the total number of active projects and the total number of recipient institutions by country. This includes research projects (PIs, Corporate Projects, and other activities such as those by former PIs) and Secretariat projects.

COUNTRY OF RECIPIENTS	TOTAL GRANT CAD	ENRM CAD	SEE CAD	ICT4D CAD	NO. PROJECTS	NO. RECIPIENTS
IDRC <sup>1,4</sup>	9,957,030	2,836,276	4,792,268	2,328,486	56	-
India <sup>2</sup>	6,015,107	3,294,015	2,144,069	577,023	33	39
Vietnam <sup>3</sup>	4,532,937	663,220	3,321,017	548,700	38	50
Canada	3,066,889	2,189,510	665,820	211,559	14	15
Nepal	2,392,172	955,154	1,318,671	118,347	13	15
Philippines	1,976,374	1,300,560	449,470	226,344	9	29
China	1,770,816	932,320	534,673	303,823	12	19
Bangladesh	1,612,820	1,133,320	404,500	75,000	6	6
Cambodia	1,298,231	982,440	315,791		4	9
Sri Lanka	743,583	177,608	560,341	5,634	6	11
Thailand	727,502		467,134	260,368	2	8
Mongolia	597,828	287,300		310,528	4	4
Lao PDR	519,643	344,329	19,514	155,800	4	6
Pakistan	516,587	169,046	295,300	52,241	5	6
Syria	500,000	500,000			1	1
Indonesia	495,617		50,685	444,932	3	9
Italy	313,300	313,300			1	1
USA	311,600	311,600			1	1
Bhutan	284,056	284,056			2	2
Australia	153,600		153,600		1	1
Kenya	150,100	150,100			1	1
Malaysia	127,633		53,559	74,074	-	4
Ireland	85,376			85,376	1	1
Singapore	72,200			72,200	1	2
Kyrgyzstan	15,000			15,000	-	1
Solomon Islands	13,491			13,491	-	1
Papua New Guine	5,690			5,690	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,255,182</b>	<b>16,824,154</b>	<b>15,546,412</b>	<b>5,884,616</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>% OF TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>15%</b>		

**Notes:**

1. These are Centre administered projects, there are no recipients.
2. CAD 3 m of the ENRM figure can be attributed to the CIDA cofunded BAIF project.
3. CAD 2.4 m of the SEE figure can be attributed to the CIDA cofunded VEEM project.
4. CAD 4.5 m of the SEE figure can be attributed to the EEPSEA Secretariat.

## Country of Recipient



## **Annex B**

### **IDRC-SARO Regional Consultation Summary**

From March 5-7 2002, SARO hosted a consultation in New Delhi to bring together partners, key thinkers, and IDRC staff active in the region. The purpose was to reflect on emerging trends and issues in South Asia, and their implications for current IDRC programming. The consultation was intended to provide a space for IDRC and key regional stakeholders to think beyond particular projects and to reflect on how IDRC could refine and strengthen current programming based on critical regional concerns. This included a focus on the implications of rapidly changing political and economic environments on regional research and development and IDRC's strategic niche in the region.

Participants included a diverse group of stakeholders, coming from a range of organizations and disciplines, including research institutions, universities, government, NGOs, indigenous peoples' organizations, and other donor organizations, and reflecting the wide diversity of partners with whom we work. There were 53 participants in total, including 37 IDRC partners from the region, 12 IDRC staff from the Ottawa and Singapore offices, and 4 program staff from SARO. Approximately two-thirds of the regional partners were current IDRC recipients, while another third constituted potential partners and key development actors in the region. Although SARO had aimed for relatively equal representation among program areas and countries, cancellations resulted in a larger number of ENRM partners and because of heightened political sensitivities between India and Pakistan, only one of the invited Pakistani participants attended.

#### **Consultation Objectives**

The consultation objectives were to engage in a dialogue with research partners and key actors in South Asia on priority issues and emerging regional trends in order to strengthen the implementation of IDRC's Corporate Strategic Program Framework (CSPF). The CSPF is the guide for the Centre's programming for the period 2000-2005. The specific objectives of the consultation included:

1. Identifying strengths, gaps and opportunities of current IDRC programming in South Asia, within the current corporate program framework;
2. Facilitating dialogue and reflection on the effects of regional trends and conditions on applied research and development;
3. Identifying important emerging regional issues and trends that IDRC programming should take into account (including those that cut across program areas); and
4. Strengthening and building partnerships through interaction with regional stakeholders and partners.

## Process

Prior to the March consultation in New Delhi, electronic discussion lists for each program area were developed in February 2002, through the support of Bellanet. SARO commissioned and circulated background papers that highlighted emerging issues and trends in the region within the context of IDRC programming, for each of the program areas on the lists. These papers and discussions served as inputs to the face-to-face meeting in Delhi. The approach to the Delhi meeting was based on a fluid and flexible agenda designed to include multiple and diverse perspectives. This was partly accomplished through a consultation steering committee consisting of a diverse group of participants.

## Regional Issues:

The group discussed key social, economic, political, institutional, and ecological trends and associated implications, challenges and opportunities for development programming within South Asia. Primary issues highlighted that cut across programs included:

- ***devolution, decentralization and democratization*** – the shifting of decision making and fiscal authority to communities especially for managing resources, and transfer of administrative power;
- ***governance and institutional development*** – building capacity for increasing participation in governance systems, while facing the obstacles and challenges of weak governance and poor accountability; also recognizing the changing role of the state with increasing privatization and devolution; opportunities for ICTs;
- ***changing social structures and the increasing poverty gap*** – new processes of social and economic exclusion being created; yet also opportunities for social/gender empowerment;
- ***transmission channels*** – linking macro policies with the meso and micro levels, particularly relating economic reforms to poverty alleviation;
- ***conflict and security*** – impacts of conflict over resources, boundaries and communal tensions, tentative opportunities for reconstruction in select areas;
- ***the increasing role of the informal sector and livelihoods*** – impacts of global economic and political forces on the informal sector, and links between livelihoods and biodiversity/natural resources, the need for sustainability and improved benefits to poor;
- ***the lack of regional integration*** – challenges in encouraging regional cooperation and collaboration for transboundary concerns and mutual issues;
- ***and the need for interdisciplinary and anticipatory research*** – although some strong research organizations in South Asia, few have capacity to implement interdisciplinary research.

There was also a strong call for continued programming that supports regional collaboration and networking, and that encourages south-south interaction, learning and exchange.

Program area groups brought these cross-cutting regional trends within the framework of IDRC programming, and discussed not only the “what” but also the “with whom” and “how” of doing research in the region. Issues highlighted included: opportunities for programming linkages between program areas, ‘closing the loop’ or policy impacts of research, delivery systems, project administration and planning, improved communications and networking, challenges in scaling up, and capacity building.

Overall, the meeting discussions strongly validated IDRC’s current programming in the region and provided ideas and suggestions for the refinement of program’s content and operations. It should be noted, however, SARO organizers and IDRC management made clear to participants before and during the meeting that this was a mid-term review of implementation of the CSPF in the region, so that there would be no major changes in the framework. The emphasis was given to sharpening the focus of the existing program; however, this may have limited inputs on other programming issues and thinking ‘outside the box’.

As a result of the meeting, each program area has a rich source of both crosscutting and program area specific ideas. The program teams and SARO are now distilling the information and ideas generated in the consultation to integrate these ideas into ongoing and future program refinement and development.